PERIODICO EN ESPAÑOL ADENTRO

CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM ★ LUCHA POR EL COMUNISMO ★ PLP

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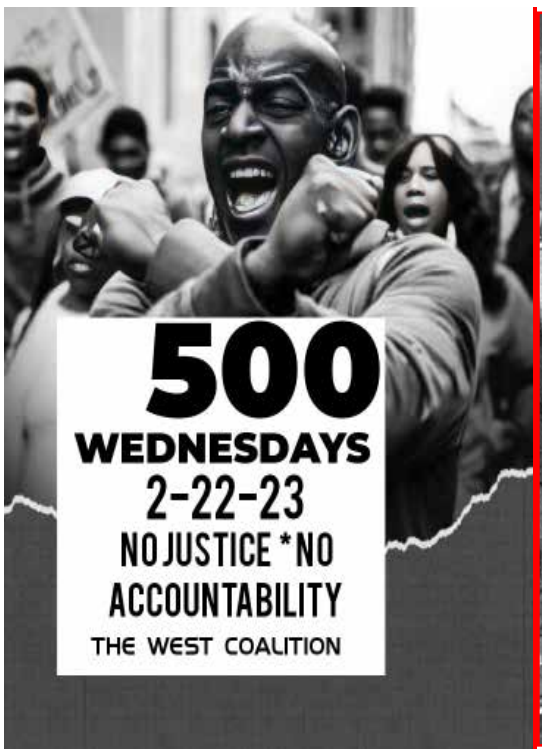
The 500th Fight for West—

NO JUSTICE UNDER KKKAPITALISM



500 days of screaming justice for Tyrone We will never stop fighting for our class brothers and sisters.

BALTIMORE, February 22—For the 500th time, we decried racism. A successful protest caravan, stretching 22 vehicles long, boldly wound through the city's streets. The demand was accountability for the police murder of Tyrone West, and for all victims of police brutality. Tyrone's life was stolen in July of 2013 by 17 racist cops, in the same way George Floyd and Tyre Nichols were murdered by capitalist thugs in blue. These 500 protests prove there is no justice under this capitalist system. As we demand accountability, we must also organize the fight for a world run by the working class - that's communism.

Importance of a long-range outlook

Every Wednesday, for nine-and-a-half years, without fail, a street rally or a livestream event has been organized as a central part of carrying on this struggle.

Progressive Labor Party (PLP) has done its best to help strengthen this important anti-racist work. And PLP has simultaneously strived to share its vision of the future, a communist world with no more racism of any type, and no more police brutality.

Seven Party members from the DC area also participated in the caravan, adding strength and additional logistical capability that proved particularly helpful after the lead car was disabled.

New generation of fighters

A young comrade, who has made regular contributions to West Wednesday for some years, spoke at the final rally. He began, *No more police terrorism!*

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JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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OUR FIGHT

✰Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

✰The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

✰Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

✰While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

✰Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

✰Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

✰Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

✰Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✰Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

✰Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

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Editorial

From Turkey to Ohio Capitalism Kills

Millions of workers have been devastated by earthquakes in Turkey and Syria and a train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio–and most of all, by capitalism. These tragic events were not "natural" disasters or accidents. Corrupt building practices and neglected infrastructure are part and parcel of a system that's based on the ruthless drive for maximum profit.

On February 6, the mass collapse of flimsy buildings in Turkey and Syria killed 50,000 workers and displaced millions. Three days earlier, an oversized Norfolk Southern train with inadequate brakes burst into flames. Fifty cars derailed, spewing toxic chemicals into the air, killing thousands of fish in nearby waterways and potentially contaminating the area's drinking water (Newsweek, 2/17).

As imperialist rulers hoard resources to prepare for their next global conflict, more corners will be cut at the expense of workers' health and safety. To get workers to passively accept these disasters and then agree to fight in World War III, the capitalist bosses will need increasing fascist repression."Lesser evilism," the idea that some bosses are less racist, less sexist, or less profit-driven than others, will be a literal "dead end."

Under the leadership of Progressive Labor Party, the international working class must turn the guns around and seize state power. Only then can we guarantee that the construction industry, the railroads, the chemical plants, and the water treatment facilities serve workers' needs. The only solution is communist revolution!

Turkey's bosses: profits over workers

Instead of going all out to save and help workers after the earthquakes, the Turkish ruling class went all out to prepare for their regional oil wars with neighboring bosses in Syria and Iraq. Because of decades of racist displacement by the Turkish rulers, the Kurdish and Syrian populations were hardest hit by the disaster. Predictably, Turkish President Recep Erdogan dodged all responsibility: "What happens, happens, this is part of fate's plan" (The Guardian, 2/09). Days later, Turkey resumed its bombing of Kurdish forces in Syria and resumed its pursuit of a $20 billion deal for F-16 fighter jets from the U.S. (Associated Press, 2/20). As the U.S. bosses square off against Russian imperialism in their proxy war in Ukraine, they're doing all they can to strengthen NATO and consolidate its relationship with the Turkish ruling class. But Turkey has become an unreliable regional ally, as evidenced by its purchase of $2.5 billion in Russian missiles in 2017.

Like all capitalist rulers, Turkey's bosses have long placed profits over people. To deflect the masses' rage after a previous earthquake killed over 18,000 people due to faulty construction, Erdogan promised tighter building safety codes. But in 2019, he boasted of granting zoning "amnesties" to contractors, 40,000 of them in the hard-hit city of Gaziantep alone (NPA Syria, 2/23). Warnings from disaster specialists were ignored (Birgun, 2/06). After the most recent earthquakes, Erdogan's regime moved quickly to funneling relief efforts into the corrupt Disaster and Emergency Management Authority, which is notorious for rewarding patronage jobs to Erdogan supporters.

U.S. infrastructure strategy a train wreck

President Joe Biden's Build Back Better Plan focused on the U.S. infrastructure crisis over helping workers survive the bosses' latest economic crisis. As the U.S. rulers drive toward more full-blown fascism, they are calling for workers' "sacrifice" and funneling more resources toward war preparations. One big problem for the bosses is the lack of discipline within their own class, including the railroad bosses. A core principle of Precision Scheduled Railroading, the operating standard for major railways in the U.S., is to eliminate "unnecessary" costs. In practice, this translates to fewer workers per train line, fewer safety measures, and less inspection time. Fronting for the dominant finance capital wing of the U.S. ruling class, Biden is squeezed between the railroad bosses' push for maximum short-term profits and the rulers' broader need for reliable transportation infrastructure for the coming global war, most likely with China. Regardless of how the bosses' internal struggle plays out, workers stand to lose. Last December, cheered on by union misleaders, Biden signed legislation designed to kill a potential strike of over 100,000 railroad workers (CNBC, 12/12/22). Once again, we saw that workers' allegiance to liberal capitalist politicians leads only to the betrayal of our own class interests. The only thing that can save us from the rot of capitalism and the bloodbath of imperialist war is to fight back against all bosses and to build PLP.

A related example: Every two days, the bosses' chemical companies have accidents. When workers fail to fight back, it's more profitable for the capitalists to absorb the cost of these accidents than to pay for rigorous safety measures (CNN, 2/22). The bosses at Norfolk Southern are well aware that their accident rate has increased each of the last four years (NS Corp, 1/25). From 2016 to 2021, there were 13,000 violations relating to hazardous materials, or triple the number in the previous five years–a clear reflection of weak federal oversight (NYT, 2/17). With over 12,000 chemical facilities across the country, many nearby residents have reason to live in fear. The predominantly white working class population of East Palestine and the surrounding area have been systematically segregated from their Black and Latin class sisters and brothers. They are chronically unemployed, under-employed, and underpaid. Capitalism's racist system hurts the entire working class.

For safety, workers need communist revolution

Over and again, we see workers saving workers. In Pakistan, workers risked their lives by wading through toxic, deadly flood waters to distribute vital donations. In Haiti, workers are funding and running community kitchens, and providing clothing and shelter for striking garment workers. In Turkey and Syria, thousands of workers and youth are breaking through the border to help other workers after the earthquakes. All of these efforts are courageous and essential. But ultimately, they will be futile if we fail to understand that we can save ourselves and our class only by smashing capitalism, the root of all these problems.

Earthquakes will keep happening under communism. But when the working class gains state power, and enforces strict rules for development and building safety, the human toll of these disasters will be far less. Transportation accidents will also occur under communism, though there will surely be fewer of them when workers are empowered to oversee the production and maintenance of these systems. When the means of production are owned by and for the working class, rather than by private individuals and corporations, a strong and resilient infrastructure will be viewed as a social necessity. By working together and sharing resources, liberated from the divisions of private property and wage slavery, workers will create a safer, freer world. Join us! Build Progressive Labor Party!✪

Forum: fighting to learn

Lessons on multiracial unity

Brooklyn, February 11—More than 40 antiracists participated in a multigenerational and multiracial forum on the necessity of multiracial unity in the fight against racism. Participants included high school students, college students, teachers, and other young workers. This gathering was so inspiring that one person joined the Party! That's another nail in the bosses' coffin. Fighting to understand how we, workers all over the world, can and must unite to overthrow this racist system of capitalism requires urgency, especially as the bosses continue to torpedo towards world war.

Fighting racism and preparing to turn the capitalists' imperialist war into a class war for communism. That's our task as communists. Only a communist society, one run by and for the international working class, can rid this planet of all the inequities and injustice we face day in and day out.

Fight for working-class unity, not multicultural capitalism

After a few icebreakers to help everyone get to know each other a bit more, we began our study on racism as a tool of the capitalists. We used a number of political cartoons to demonstrate how the ruling class uses racism to divide workers and prevent us from fighting back. By paying white workers more than Black and Latin workers, the bosses create a culture of violent competition and pit workers against one another. The bosses' media pushes racist narratives to make workers see other workers as the enemy. But communism means workers uniting to fight back against a common enemy: the capitalist ruling class. Fighting for a society where everyone works to benefit the international working class - that's communism.

And multiracial fightback is working class history. As recently as 2020, after the murder of George Floyd by the kkkops, the United States saw the biggest multiracial uprisings against racism in the country's history. Hundreds of thousands marched in cities large and small, with antiracist solidarity demonstrations occurring all over the world.

The protests included the countries of Nigeria, Argentina, Lithuania, South Africa, Ireland, Brazil, Mexico, Italy, Austria, Japan, South Korea, Poland, Norway, India, Tunisia, Pakistan, South Africa, Sweden, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Brazil, Syria, the United Kingdom, Senegal, and more.

We also used photographs and cartoons from around the world, from Colombia to Alabama, to show how workers fight back against racism in strikes and on the street, despite all the racist lies we are bombarded with. These cartoons demonstrated the power workers have when they reject the ruling class's murderous lies and unite with other workers. One such cartoon showed workers resisting the phony messages of politician misleaders and fighting back against the bosses' kkkop army to climb a mountain of justice.

After discussing the images and political cartoons, we broke out into small groups to discuss the history of racism. We debunked the myth that "racism has always been around" and discussed the ruling class's intentional use of state power and violence to separate and define "Black" and "white'' as a way to prevent multiracial working class rebellion in the 1600s and 1700s in colonial America. For example, the ruling class of Virginia passed a law in 1661 that stated that "in case any English servant shall run away in company of any Negroes," the servant would have to work extra years for the Black person's master. Also, in 1691, Virginia provided for the banishment of any "white man or woman being free who shall intermarry with a negro, mulatto, or Indian man or woman bond or free." The bosses' have always feared multi-racial unity and antiracist fightback.

Only communism can end racism

Capitalist misleaders try to fool us by putting multiracial faces in high places. We cannot be fooled into thinking electing Black mayors like Eric Adams and Lori Lightfoot or so-called progressives like AOC's Squad are going to spare the working class from capitalist exploitation. Nor can we be swept up in false hope from the elections of indigenous presidents in Peru or "left" ones in Colombia. These liberal fascists are the greatest danger for the working class. We cannot smash racism by voting in a rainbow of politicians committed to the same mass murder, deportation, and exploitation of workers as their white counterparts or by diversifying police forces who will continue gunning down youth like Tyre Nichols.

We need to fight for communist revolution, which will never be on the ballot. Capitalists need racism, workers don't. Communism means workers run everything. Only through communism can we end racism.

You too can join the fight to smash this racist, capitalist system and build a communist future. Join us on May Day! Join Progressive Labor Party!✪

500th West Wednesday

New generation of fighters against racism

continued from page 1

I'm a member of the Progressive Labor Party, and my belief is in a revolutionary society where we go beyond this system.

He went on to say the purpose of police under capitalism is to divide us racially, create fear, ansuppress the whole working class. He ended with words that earned applause: "It's good that we've come together as a…multiracial coalition." Another young PL'er from DC also spoke, sharing that only with revolution can we end police terror.

Some tears and some comfort

The night before the caravan, at the final planning meeting, one topic was how everyone felt after so many years of struggle. A member of Tyrone's family became tearful, talking about all of these 500 weeks, while Tyrone's main killers remain on the police force, with promotions. But she also spoke about how vital the support has been for her, and about specific contributions by particular freedom fighters in the West Coalition.

In the case of a PLP member, she said he has given her comfort that helps when things are rough, based on an understanding he has shared that there is always a solution.

When it was this comrade's turn to speak, he explained that dialectical materialism (the philosophy at the heart of communism) teaches that all things exist in paired opposites. Therefore, the existence of a problem implies the existence of its solution. Or, to put it another way, history poses no problem for which the solution doesn't already exist. It was one of those moments when the positive role of communists, in an antiracist mass movement, was clear, helpful, and heart-warming.

Working women leaders in the movement

During this evening's caravan, Tyrone's sister stood tall through a moonroof, speaking and chanting powerfully to everyone in the long train of vehicles and to passersby.

There will never be justice or accountability in a racist, violent system. Fight for communism!

Things were well-organized, with the front and rear cars in steady communication. Flyers had been prepared for handing out at mini-rallies along the route.

However, before even reaching the site of the first mini-rally, the lead car, with flashers on, made the route's planned turn onto a major street. That lead car was suddenly and severely rear-ended – and probably totaled – by a driver who turned, much too fast, onto the same street, from a different direction. The speeding driver may have been careless and distracted, or sent by police.

Three people were in the caravan's lead car. Fortunately, no one was seriously hurt, but their car was forcefully thrust off the street, across a sidewalk, and onto a home's front yard, barely missing a major collision with a large tree.

Led by the women in the West Coalition, the caravan stayed in place, allowing time to deal with the situation. Then they re-organized a new lead car and rear car. Considering the time that had been lost, they wisely led the caravan directly to the final rally at City Hall.

Other volunteers had previously set up a huge grill at City Hall so that, after the final rally, delicious hot meals were ready for everyone. In addition, twenty-eight people took copies of CHALLENGE.

It was clear that racism is the weak spot of capitalism. Just like when the horrific murder of George Floyd sparked twenty million people to hit the streets for months of forceful protest, the horrors of racism, including the horrendous murder of Tyrone West, continually lead to mass movements within which new leaders step forward. The future is bright. Never give up in the fight for communism!✪

5th Annual Black & Red

Black workers key to communism

CHICAGO, February 26 – Around 50 Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members and friends gathered on the city's south side today to celebrate our fifth annual Black and Red event. The multiracial, multi-generational and international crowd in attendance engaged in an interactive program that highlighted the invaluable leadership and contributions of Black communists in past, present, and future revolutionary struggles.

Our local collective began organizing this event five years ago as a response to the many anti-communist distortions and outright lies by the bosses that falsely claim communism to be a political movement limited to white workers. The truth is that Black workers have always given key leadership to the fight for communist revolution, correctly understanding it as the only force to destroy the racism, sexism, and exploitation inherent in the capitalist profit system.

In contrast to the bosses' Black History Month celebrations, which emphasize the need for more Black-owned businesses and individual success, PLP emphasizes the importance of Black workers leading the Party with comrades all over the world to put an end to racist capitalism once and for all. To be Black and red is to be an antiracist revolutionary!

Working-class Black history is communist history

We began our day at the DuSable Black History Museum, a south side landmark for over 50 years. The museum was founded by Margaret Taylor-Burroughs and her husband Charles, two Black organizers with well-known communist affiliations. PLP members made a list of scavenger hunt questions for our group to engage with the different exhibits and highlight the more radical history of various freedom movements.

We next headed to the local fieldhouse for lunch, socializing, and an event program. After dining on some delicious West African dishes, a new comrade kicked festivities off with an impassioned reading of "Good Morning, Revolution" by Black communist poet Langston Hughes. Although modern sources prefer to ignore or minimize Hughes' embrace of communist internationalism, any serious analysis of his works such as this poem demonstrate his commitment to revolution.

Another veteran PLP member then took the mic to give some historical context to the violent mass struggle to end chattel slavery and the influence that struggle had on the theories of the communist Karl Marx. Through his work as a journalist reporting on the Civil War in the United States, Marx was able to better develop his understanding of how racism is essential to the profits of capitalism and how one could not be seriously fought without fighting the other.

We next watched a short video also highlighting the influence of communist theory and practice on countless antiracist mass movements in the 20th century, including the defense of the Scottsboro Nine against legalized lynching during the Great Depression and the struggle against the brutal apartheid regime in South Africa. Far from being confined to the history books, the lessons learned from these brave struggles continue to inform our fight in the present day.

Lastly, to give the keynote speech, another veteran comrade drew on her decades of experience as a Black communist in PLP and how that has guided her fightback against racism and sexism in profound ways:

> *The earliest comrades of our Party realized that the people who had this generational commitment to fighting the capitalist power structure had to lead this revolutionary movement for it to ultimately win.*
>
> *Along with this leadership being mandatory for this Party to win, multiracial working-class unity also had to be a defining factor. Our Party views antiracism as more than just a 'good feeling.' It is dedicated fighting action in just about every way imaginable.*

Black workers are key revolutionary force

In the fight to destroy capitalism, the international working class must rely on the leadership of those workers most exploited and oppressed by this rotten racist system to truly win an egalitarian communist world. We salute our Black comrades and fellow workers for their ongoing role as an indispensable revolutionary force.✪

DC

Fight imperialist warmongers

WASHINGTON, DC, February 19—As the first anniversary of Russia's invasion approached, over 2,000 people rallied against the war at the iconic Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. Workers from Russia to the U.S. must push back against nationalism and imperialist war. Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members attended the march with a flyer headlined, "The only good imperialist is a dead imperialist." The PLP flyer declared that to end bloody wars that turn workers into cannon fodder for profit, the entire imperialist system has to be destroyed with a communist revolution. All major wars today are battles over profit and empire. The global working class has no dog in these inter-imperialist fights. We say, No War But Class War, to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat—workers power! By distributing over 200 flyers and 100 CHALLENGE newspapers, we reached many earnest anti-war forces who attended, contacting several who will help build an anti-imperialist movement.

Anti-war doesn't mean anti-capitalist

Without working-class political leadership, hundreds of workers will see themselves as having the same class interests as bosses, marching generations of workers into the battlefield. The Progressive Labor Party has been fighting to show and build leadership in the working class since the Vietnam War. We will continue pushing multiracial groups of workers to turn the guns against imperialist bosses, especially as World War III gets closer.

The rally was organized by libertarians, an organized group that prides itself on being anti-government and strong individualists. The differences between these groups and PLP were on full display. Members of PLP noted that no non-libertarian groups of workers took the mic. Yet, the rally billed itself as an attempt to unite workers, a necessary initiative that needs to happen amongst workers to drown out left and right-wing media that pits us against each other. Still, another weakness is that none of the speakers – "right" or "left" - advanced an anti-imperialist analysis despite being an anti-war rally.

While libertarians oppose foreign oil wars and promote the Fortress America vision of building a small government to protect the interests of the American people, what they really mean is to protect the right of bosses to exploit workers and keep their profits within their borders. They directly play into the hands of domestically oriented billionaires like Charles Koch who represent the Small Fascist, America First isolationist wing of the U.S. ruling class(see glossary page 6). In contrast, being anti-war for PLP means fighting for communist revolution to end all imperialist profiteering and build a collectively run society that benefits all.

Small and Big, fascists are the enemy

At each new level of imperialist war, politicians, union bosses, and reform leaders are used to squelch working class unity, especially multiracial unity between Black, Latin, and white workers. Although politicians Ron Paul and Tulsi Gabbard railed against U.S. arms for Ukraine, liberals in Biden's camp have shown their potential to get more nation-focused bosses like Paul and Gabbard in line as World War III drums beat closer.

Ron Paul cited concerns about inflation and rising energy and gas prices as a reason for his objection against providing foreign aid to Ukraine last May (New York Times, 5/22). This division highlights an ideological difference between factions of the U.S. ruling class. To better understand the direction imperialist bosses will forge, we classify this division as a split between big and small fascists. Small nationalist fascists like the Koch brothers primarily appeal to a gutter racist, Christian base. Domestically oriented corporate leaders shame liberals for not opposing Biden's extensive liberal imperialist backers ready to nuke Russia for another 200 years of economic dominance.

Neither side of these bosses are friends of the working class. Each will terrorize workers, be it in the U.S. or worldwide, to make the most profits. Small fascists like Ron Paul, a former Texas Congressman, are considered the "intellectual godfathers" of the Tea Party movement and headed the Koch brothers' Citizens for Sound Economy, an ideological front for anti-government and pro-privatization companies to sway policies and politicians.

Small fascists like Paul and the Koch brothers rely on gutter racism against Black and Latin workers to fool white and multiracial workers into believing these politics will serve them, too. Paul opposes affirmative action and uses the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to shame liberal politicians for failing to promote racial unity and a "color-blind society." U.S. representatives, including Dennis Kucinich and Green Party leaders Jill Stein and Cynthia McKinney, help liberal fascist bosses use politicians' gutter racist public displays to win honest antiracists to vote for their leadership. To smash racism indefinitely, struggling for internationalist communist leadership from the Progressive Labor Party is our class' best chance.

The ten demands of the march criticized U.S./NATO roles in aggressively encircling Russia since 1991, mainly since the U.S. supported the coup in Ukraine in 2014, but were entirely uncritical of Russian imperialist actions in Ukraine. A genuine concern for the world's workers requires supporting workers' resistance to imperialism in the U.S., NATO, Russia and Ukraine. Rebuilding an internationalist communist movement with the stance that workers across borders have more to gain with worker-led fightback than the imperialist war funded by bosses can make this a reality. By attending this misleading rally, PLP members were able to reach hundreds of people with just such an analysis and will fight to continue to push this line and win workers to fight for it too.✪

Rest in power, Carolyn

Antiracist & communist till the end

Carolyn Eubanks, longtime Progressive Labor Party (PLP) member, died in her home in the Bronx at the age of 80. Despite her advanced age, Carolyn was brimming with life. A tireless antiracist fighter and communist leader till the end, Carolyn spent the last week of her life volunteering at La Morada's mutual aid soup kitchen, showing up at the courthouse to support the family of Raymond Chaluisant, a young worker murdered by a NYC corrections kkkop, and attending a political event at the CUNY graduate center.

Antiracist upbringing

Born in North Carolina to a working-class family who worked in a local company mill, Carolyn often credited her upbringing with setting her on the path to becoming a communist. Despite growing up in a racist Southern town during the Jim Crow era, her parents instilled in her antiracist working class values. Racist language was banned in their home. She witnessed capitalist oppression firsthand–the differential treatment given to the children of workers and bosses in the mills in school and in the town. Carolyn's mother insisted she learn arithmetic to calculate her wages correctly, because the mill bosses could not be trusted.

In 1958 when the Soviet Union launched Sputnik the U.S. bosses passed the National Defense Education Act which sent thousands of young people, including Carolyn, to college on scholarships to study math and science. Carolyn always credited the Soviet Union for her college education and her route out of the company town. After graduating from the University of North Carolina she joined the Peace Corps, spending two years in the Philippines, where she saw the effects of imperialism and the ways large U.S. multinational corporations exploited workers around the world.

Joining the Party and facing the KKKops

Carolyn met PLP when she was in New York studying at Union Theological Seminary. She was immediately won over to the Party's idea of smashing capitalism and building a communist world and joined the Party. In the summer of 1979, Carolyn joined a PLP summer project in Tupelo, Mississippi which the KKK had declared would be their headquarters. Along with over 40 other protestors, Carolyn participated in an antiracist, multiracial march straight through Tupelo's town center. When the march entered the town square a racist, abetted by the KKKiller Kops, fired a shotgun into the crowd and hit Carolyn with buckshot. When a second march was organized just three weeks later, Carolyn boldly marched in the first row alongside her Black and white comrades.

A tireless antiracist and fierce communist fighter.

Organizing Black students from Houston to NYC

Carolyn taught for many years at Worthing High School, an all-Black school in the segregated part of Houston. Carolyn attended football games with her students, organized trips and socials, and led fightbacks against the racist conditions. She helped to organize a march in Houston commemorating the 1917 rebellion of Black soldiers who fought back against their racist abuse by white officers (see the book Night of Violence by Robert Hayes). She brought students and their parents to May Day demonstrations every year. She loved to host Game Nights at her apartment, where she made her famous chili. After many years teaching in Houston, Carolyn was attacked for being a communist. The death threats were real and constant. Carolyn slept with a loaded gun under her pillow but never wavered in her fightback.

After moving back to NYC, Carolyn taught math at John F. Kennedy High School, in the Bronx for twenty-five years. She helped students organize a sit-down protest when school security physically attacked several children. She also organized students, teachers and parents to fight back against cutbacks and the use of metal detectors.

Between 2005 and 2018 Carolyn made several trips to Israel-Palestine. Alongside comrades and workers in Israel and Palestine she helped organize against the fascist apartheid state, while raising internationalist communist politics. Her work united college students, medical workers, and educators in New York City and Israel-Palestine. She built close ties with workers living there, winning several of them to join the Party. In her 2018 trip, a group of students she inspired invited her to spend the day with them at a political camp they put together for Palestinian children. In New York, Carolyn was active in the international working group of PLP and once traveled with her comrade to Dallas to participate in a One State in Israel/Palestine conference, where she and a comrade insisted that the conference's demand was insufficient if the state remained capitalist.

Bringing communism to the congregation

For years Carolyn was an active and beloved member of St Mary's, an integrated social justice church in Harlem. She participated in Sunday morning services injecting communist politics into discussions of "grounds for hope," while sharing coffee. She was a mainstay in the food distribution program and, most importantly, she was a vital leader in the church's justice and peace organizing. Through the Congregations for Justice and Peace, Carolyn, alongside comrades and friends, fought against Columbia University's racist displacement agenda, organized to restore the community health clinic, and demonstrated against racist police terror.

Carolyn helped lead the fight against racist cop terror in the Bronx for more than 30 years. In the 90's, she joined forces with the Baez, Vega, Zarate, and Rosario families—all whose children were murdered by the New York Police Department. She helped build Parents Against Police Brutality (PAPB), which was one of the country's first family-led organizations, specifically assembled to unite the families of countless Black and Latin workers murdered by the NYPD. This organizing culminated with Carolyn helping to organize and lead the very first open and PLP-led march against the murder of Amadou Diallo in 1999. Her commitment to the victims' families was an example for all as she continued to lead and organize against the murder of Ramarley Graham and Shantel Davis.

A fighter till the end

During the last year of her life, she played an important role in helping to lead PLP's most recent struggle against the murder of Raymond Chaluisant, organizing several rallies in his neighborhood supporting his family, and attending almost every one of kkkiller cop Dion Middleton's court appearances. Carolyn always made a point of building relationships with the families of these victims, while struggling with them and all workers and students involved, to understand that only a communist revolution will bring an end to racist cop killings.

Bella Ciao, Carolyn

Carolyn left an indelible mark on comrades, friends, and all those who knew her. She devoted her life time to serving the working class.We can honor her legacy by living each day as she did—with love and concern for the working class. In Carolyn's memory: Let's fight for a better world, let's fight for communism! ✪

NYC: Capitalist crisis drives racist healthcare cuts

NEW YORK CITY, February 23—NYC's City Council held hearings on a bill that would cut city sponsored health benefits. These cuts are coming because capitalism is in crisis and at war. The bosses are trying to manage their crisis on the backs of the working class. The bosses view the lives of retirees as expendable since they no longer produce profits. At the hearing city and union leaders spoke on the need to control costs by cutting benefits. Retirees spoke against decreasing access to health benefits or increasing the costs for workers when they use these benefits. The struggle to stop the reduction of city sponsored health benefits to these and the current workforce continues. The racist cuts are also exposing once again that the union's leadership is loyal to the bosses system and will do whatever the ruling class needs them to do. Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members active in this struggle are urging our friends to join our movement to build a communist world where healthcare will be free to all based only on their needs.

Workers are fighting back!

CHALLENGE has reported on efforts by retirees to stop these givebacks which have been agreed to by the New York City government and the Municipal Labor Committee (MLC), an umbrella of all city unions having contracts with NYC. Demonstrations at city hall and union headquarters as well as mass letter writing and telephone call campaigns have expressed our anger at attempts to privatize our medicare benefits. This attempted change will mean less access to needed health treatment and will affect low-income workers the most (disproportionately Black, Latin and women). Now this same gang is pressing for similar reductions for the active workers. Similar cuts are going on or have taken place throughout the U.S.

Capitalist decay driving attacks on health benefits

The U.S. bosses are facing the increased likelihood of war as they face off against their main im-

Continued on page 6

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

She was a comrade to look up to

A comrade to look up to. The day after the family of Raymond appeared in a Bronx court, I called Carolyn to find out what happened. She said she debated with herself whether to go to the court and decided to go. Raymond's mother and our comrade, Carolyn hugged and shared a few words. An example of Carolyn's confidence and undying love of our working class.

* * * * *

Fight back and crush the bosses' traps

Wage theft in New York City, despite the existence of laws that "protect" the worker, is far too common. We know about the law against wage theft, but it is increasingly difficult to find justice, since the bosses always divide workers to prevent them from organizing collectively.

At the beginning of this month, a group of more than 40 workers from different community organizations met, marched and held a sit-in in front of a luxurious hotel, on 60th Street near Central Park. The action was taken because the hotel bosses fired, unfairly and without reason,and stole wages from a worker with many years of service. That worker had not been informed of her dismissal and she was not allowed to go into work when she had arrived to do so.

The organization, where several Progressive Labor Party comrades are members, accompanied her and we chanted our classic slogans in the march: "Workers United Will Never Be Defeated!" … "This Fist Can be Seen, Workers in Power,"and other chants. At the door of the hotel, the letter was delivered to those in charge of the administration on duty, and we hope soon for the solution and reinstatement of the worker at this employment.

The bosses make the laws and the traps; the workers must fight and crush their traps.

* * * * *

Capitalists "Steel" 50,000 workers' lives

After viewing daily media video on the Turkey-Syria earthquake, two contradictions emerge, the first being the total absence of any steel beams in the concrete-wire mesh debris from endless photos of modern high-rise buildings that collapsed over each other. The second contradiction was many perfectly intact high-rise buildings right across streets from rows of collapsed homes. Turkish leader Erdogan had granted amnesty to housing contractors who'd defied safety codes and regulations using wire mesh instead of steel beams to provide faster, cheaper building frames. Not only did the cheaper constructed buildings fail to prevent the earthquake from flattening them, but the wire mesh debris has prevented rescuers from digging victims out. There are also protests over a missing billion-dollar fund collected after the last earthquake to build aid stations and care for victims of future catastrophes. Because of capitalist greed and corruption, Turkey is approaching 50,000 casualties and 13 million homeless.

Meanwhile in the US, a two-mile long 150-car train crash in Ohio is flooding thousands in poor communities with toxic gasses and poisoned water. Railroad companies are profiting big time in cuts in their workforce, maintenance and safety.

Today's events prove capitalists will sacrifice to the last worker for their own profits and will stop at nothing to stay in

power. Progressive Labor Party calls for a communist revolution to replace our profit dominated social system with a communist

society without wages, profits and divisions.

* * * * *

Workers call out China CP's sellout

Some older people in China seem to remain boldly supportive of real communist principles, and critical of the Communist Party's sellouts.

The following passage is from a New York Times article yesterday about recent protests in China against cuts in government-provided medical insurance.

Video footage that circulated online indicated that large crowds gathered around Zhongshan Park in Wuhan, as the police tried to divide them by imposing barricades. When police officers tried to push the crowds back, older men and women refused to back off and shouted in officers' faces. Some sang songs like "The Internationale," an anthem employed by both the ruling Communist Party and by protesters, who have used it to suggest that the party has strayed from its ideological roots.

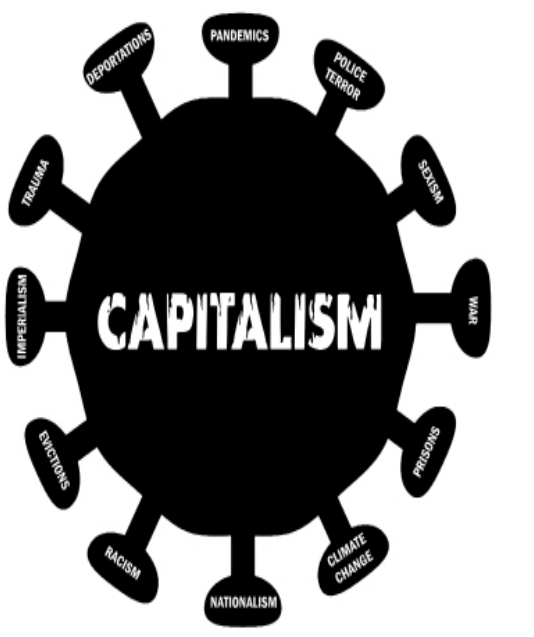
* * * * *

Capitalist crisis drives racist healthcare cuts

Continued from page 5

perialist rival China and its ally Russia. To prepare for war, bosses want to divert billions to the war budget. They know that healthcare costs as a share of the U.S. gross national product have risen from 5 percent in 1960 to 19.7 percent in 2020 (USA facts.org). Lowering these costs potentially would free up money for the war chests.

The war is related to the economic crisis being felt around the world as imperialist powers like the U.S., China and Russia compete for profits and power. As hospitals merge and grow into larger conglomerates, they demand higher rates for their services. For example the cost of a colonoscopy can range from $1,100 to $3,700 for the same procedure depending on where you go (Choicehealth.com).



CAPITALISM IS THE VIRUS. COMMUNISM IS THE CURE.

@plpchallenge | plp.org

The pharmaceutical industry is charging whatever the market will pay for new life saving drugs. New cancer drugs cost hundreds of thousands of dollars per year for those who can afford them or have insurance that will pay for them. National total health expenditures are expected to grow by at least 5.1 percent from 2021-2030 (USAfacts.org). The biggest bosses, who control policy, want to cut these costs so that they can compete against their imperialist rivals.

Fight to learn, learn to fight!

As we engage our class enemy, we need to learn about how capitalism works. We are building PLP study groups to help build more communist leaders/fighters in this battle. Join us to build a healthier world under communism✪

GLOSSARY

COMMUNIST TERMS

Fascism

Capitalism's response to a crisis of their system, when the bosses can no longer sustain the charade of liberal democracy and resort to more direct control and state terror instead. Fascism is marked by the ruling capitalists disciplining their own ranks to serve the urgent needs of the capitalist state and weather the crisis. To defend their system from internal and external threats, they use all the means available in their state apparatus, including violence. To build unity within their class and loyalty from workers, they rely on nationalist politics and calls for sacrifice. Their strategy is to mislead the working class to kill our working class sisters and brothers in the next inter-imperialist war.

Big Fascists

The Big Fascists are the dominant finance capitalist faction of the U.S. ruling class. They represent the wealthiest and most powerful bosses in the U.S., including multinational banks like Chase and Citibank, multinational oil companies like ExxonMobil, the big automakers, Boeing, Amazon, and the major media companies. As the dominant grouping since World War II, the Big Fascists were the architects of the liberal world order with the U.S. bosses on top. Their dominance rests on U.S. financial and military power and its strategic control of the Middle East and the flow of oil to Europe, Asia, and Africa. To sustain this dominance, they need to rebuild a huge, multiracial military for inter-imperialist war, most likely with China.

Small Fascists

The Small Fascists are a group of domestically oriented U.S. capitalists who are challenging the Big Fascists over the direction of U.S. imperialism. Since their interests are less tied to controlling the flow of oil, they are against heavy taxation to keep troops in the Middle East and in general oppose costly military bases and invasions. They're willing to rely on a smaller, whiter army, backed by nuclear weapons and the Air Force. They use open racism to build a political following.

Langston wrote of & fought for revolution

Continued from page 8

Her bandage hides two festering sores
That once, perhaps, were eyes.

For the November 1931 *New Masses*, Hughes wrote "Scottsboro, Limited: A One Act Play." The cast roster includes "Red Voices," who counter racist "Mob Voices" and shout out:"We'll fight! The Communists will fight for you/ not just Black—but Black and white." At the end of the play, the "Red Voices" declare: "Rise from the dead, workers, and fight!" For the finale, Hughes directs that "Here the Internationale may be sung and the red flag raised above the heads of the Black and white workers together."

To Hughes and others in the communist movement, the trial of the Scottsboro Boys was both the cutting-edge antiracist fight of the day and a huge opportunity to unite Black and white workers. For the June 1932 issue of New Masses, Hughes wrote the poem "An Open Letter to the South."

As Hughes wrote the poem, in the spring of 1932, he was preparing to join a group of 22 writers, journalists, and actors to travel through the Soviet Union.

He mailed back from the USSR to *New Masses* his rousing poem Good Morning Revolution, which was excerpted in the last issue of CHALLENGE. After writing a number of commissioned pieces for Soviet journals and a short book, *A Negro Looks at Soviet Central Asia*, Hughes returned to the U.S. in the summer of 1933. It was a pivotal period in U.S. politics, when communists played a big role in the fight against rising fascism, both in Europe and inside the U.S.

For the remainder of the 1930s, Hugues continued writing his radical poetry. He also traveled to Spain to report on the Spanish Civil War—the topic of our next CHALLENGE article.

[Biographical information is drawn from Arnold Rampersad, *The Life of Langston Hughes,* 2 vols. 2nd *edition*. New York: Oxford, 2002; and Arnold Rampersad, ed. T*he Collected Works of Langston Hughes,* 3 vols. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001✪

An open letter to the South

By Langston Hughes

White workers of the South: . . .
I am the Black worker.
Listen:
That the land might be ours,
And the mines and the factories and the
office towers
At Harlem, Richmond, Gastonia, Atlanta,
New Orleans;
That the plants and the roads and
the tools of power
Be ours:
…
Let us become instead, you and I,
One single hand
That can united rise
To smash the old dead dogmas of
the past—To kill the lies of color
That keep the rich enthroned
. . .
Let us get together, say:
"You are my brother, Black or white.
You my sister—now—today!"
. . .
We did not know that we were brothers.
Now we know!
Out of that brotherhood
Let power grow!
We did not know
That we were strong.
Now we see
In union lies our strength.
. . .
White worker,
Here is my hand.
Today,
We're Man to Man.

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Chinese bosses look to replace U.S. dollar with Yuan as reserve currency

Global Times, 2/23–Iraq's central bank is reportedly planning to settle trade from China in Chinese yuan for the first time to improve its access to foreign currency. Iraq has announced that it will finance its imports from China in yuan for the first time, a move aimed at coping with its dollar shortage and seen as a potential step for the internationalization of the Chinese currency…In addition, the yuan has seen increased use in Russia as a result of some western countries' sanctions on the country. There has also been growing discussions of using the yuan in oil settlements between China and Saudi Arabia. Iraq is the second-largest oil exporter in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), with its oil export revenue reaching $115.7 billion in 2022, according to AFP.

Russian imperialists gain support of African bosses

Al Jazeera, 2/26– An imposing Russian warship armed…a handful of Chinese naval destroyers, and a host of frigates and supply vessels docked on South Africa's coastal shores last Saturday. A year ago, it would have been hard to imagine South Africa …opting to host such an event with Russia… Outside of the Ukraine conflict, Russia has also been making massive in-roads in other parts of Africa, including Sudan, Central African Republic, and Mali where the Wagner group, a mercenary organization linked to Moscow, is involved in the fighting while some Western military forces, such as the French army in the Sahel, have made the decision to leave…Africa has also had to deal with the racial undertones of the conflict…African students in Ukraine reported numerous episodes of racial abuse and discrimination at the borders as they attempted to cross towards safety into neighboring countries alongside European refugees who were generally welcomed with open arms.

Evidence mounts that Chilean fascists murdered Pablo Neruda

New York Times, 2/25–Fifty years on, the true cause of death of the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, in the wake of the country's 1973 coup d'état, has remained in doubt across the world. The Nobel laureate was not only one of the world's most celebrated poets but also one of Chile's most influential political activists. An outspoken communist…Mr. Neruda's death in a private clinic just weeks after the coup was determined to be the result of cancer, but the timing and the circumstances have long raised doubts about whether his death was something more nefarious.

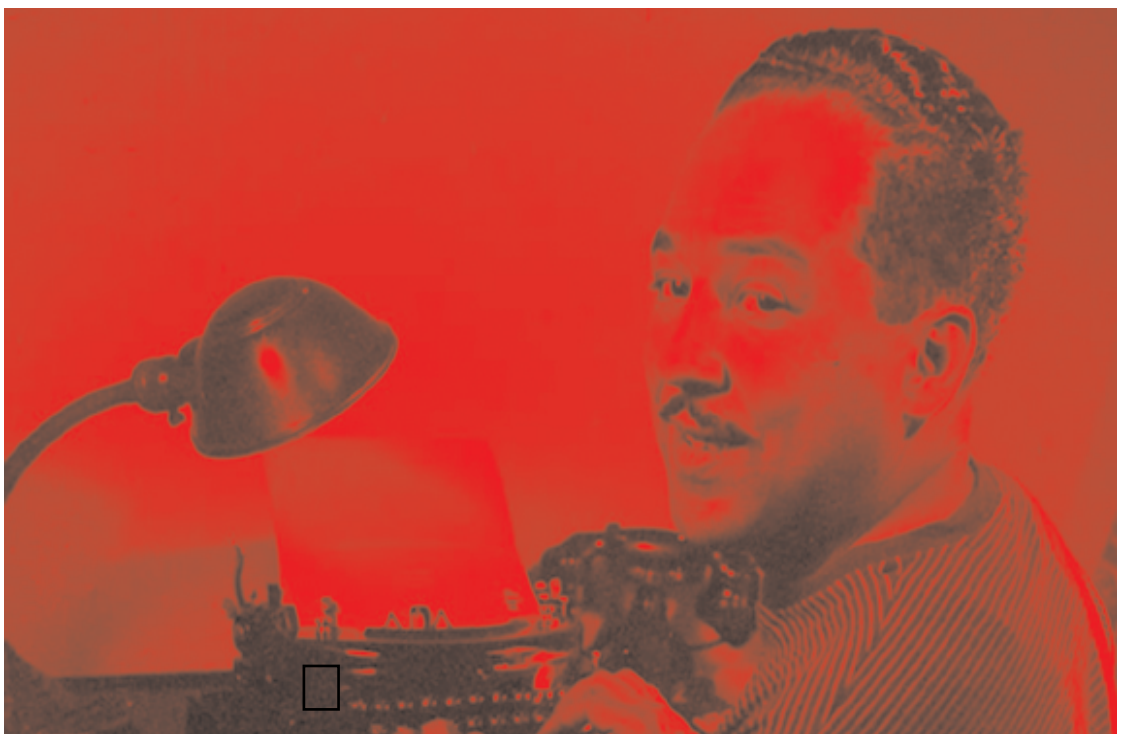
After Chile's coup d'état, one of the most violent in Latin America, troops raided Mr. Neruda's properties…On the evening of Sept. 23, 1973, the clinic reported that Mr. Neruda died of heart failure…Manuel Araya, Mr. Neruda's driver at the time, publicly claimed that the doctors at the clinic poisoned him by injecting an unknown substance into his stomach…In the final report given to a Chilean judge on Wednesday…scientists said that other circumstantial evidence supported the theory of murder, including the fact that in 1981, the military dictatorship had poisoned prisoners with bacteria potentially similar to the strain found in Mr. Neruda.

Weather and energy costs force U.K. workers to eat canned foods

CNBC, 2/28–Britain's biggest supermarkets are limiting purchases of certain fruit and vegetables as supply shortages lead to empty shelves. Britain's biggest supermarket chain, Tesco, has limited purchases of tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers to three items per customer. It said the move was due to poor weather conditions overseas and was working with suppliers to "get things back to normal." Germany-based discount supermarkets Aldi and Lidl have also introduced restrictions…Groups including the National Farmers' Union had previously warned that British farmers were struggling with higher energy costs…Andrew Opie, director of Food and Sustainability at the British Retail Consortium, said the situation had been brought to a head by weather conditions in Southern Europe and Northern Africa disrupting harvests.

ART FOR ANTIRACISTS

1930S: LANGSTON HUGHES, POET OF THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT



Multiracial unity and class struggle was instrumental in Hughes political formation.

The last issue of CHALLENGE (3/1/23) remembered Langston Hughes as a writer sharply critical of Jim Crow segregation during World War II and as a poet for the working class of the U.S.—particularly Black workers. Now we'll flash back to the 1920s and 1930s, the period when Hughes became an advocate for multiracial, anti-capitalist revolution.

Antiracism ran deep in Hughes veins

A tradition of antiracist activism ran deep in Hughes' family history. In 1858, his maternal grandmother, Mary Langston, married Lewis Leary, an abolitionist who died in John Brown's 1859 raid in Harper's Ferry. Her second husband, Charles Howard Langston, was an educator and ardent abolitionist.

According to his biographer Arnold Rampersad, young Langston Hughes was influenced by the poetry of Walt Whitman, Carl Sandburg, Paul Laurence Dunbar, and Claude McKay, along with the work of W.E.B. Du Bois, the antiracist, pro-communist writer and historian. In June 1921, Hughes' poetry was published for the first time in a professional journal. "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" came out in *The Crisis*, the journal of the NAACP.

In September 1921, Hughes moved to New York City to attend Columbia University. Not yet ready for college, he withdrew before the year was out. He plunged into Black cosmopolitan New York and met Du Bois and Jessie Fauset, both writers at *The Crisis*, and the poet Countee Collins. By 1924, after a journey to West Africa and Paris and an extended sojourn in Washington, DC, he'd become a leading light of the Harlem Renaissance. In March 1925, in the landmark issue of *Survey Graphic, Harlem: Mecca of the New Negro* (edited by Alain Locke), contained ten poems by Hughes, including: "I, too, sing America /I am the darker brother. . . ."

In 1926, Hughes published his first volume of poems, The *Weary Blues*, and a famous essay for *The Nation* (June 23, 1926). In "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," Hughes wasn't yet ready to attack capitalism or embrace the need for militant, collective antiracism. Instead, he argued for the importance of Black identity and called for racial pride: "Why should I want to be white? I am Negro—and beautiful."

Scottsboro boys: a catalyst for Hughes turn to communism

By the late 1920s, when Hughes was enrolled at Lincoln University, a historically Black institution outside Philadelphia, he was meeting communists as well as Harlem's cultural leaders. In December 1926, four of his poems were published in the communist monthly *New Masses*, though they were nowhere near as politically sharp as his work to come.

With the Great Depression, beginning in November 1929, communists took leadership positions in major labor unions. They had an explanation for the Depression and a solution for racist inequalities and capitalist exploitation. They called for multiracial unity and revolution. Hughes was drawn to these ideas in *New Masses*, and he put his art at the service of revolution.

For Hughes and millions of others, a political turning point came on March 25, 1931, when nine young Black teenagers were falsely accused of raping two white young women in a railroad boxcar in Alabama. The arrest and trial of the Scottsboro Boys galvanized communists and antiracists throughout the world. Eight of the teenagers were quickly tried by the racists and sentenced to death; a mistrial was declared for the ninth because he was underage. The Communist Party USA sent in lawyers to challenge the case. The Supreme Court overturned the convictions; one of the women recanted her accusations and even went on tour to defend the defendants. Yet they languished in jail, many of them for decades.

Hughes responded with a terse four-line poem, "Justice," for *New Masses* (July 1931), which accompanied a drawing of a lynching by artist Phil Bard.

That Justice is a blind goddess
Is a thing to which we poor are wise:

Continued on page 7

NEXT DEADLINE

CHALLENGE strives to be the communist paper for and by the international working class. We call on all readers, supporters, and comrades to submit class struggle articles, analytical pieces, original photos and graphics, letters, and political cartoons.

The next deadline is the

Friday night of March 10

Send to desafio.challenge@gmail.com. For some guidance and house style rules, please go to www.bit.ly/338ZJow

All submissions are open to collective discussion, struggle, and change. See sidebar on page 2 about fighting for collectivity and against a cult of the individual.

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